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11/23/01S/N: 09/398,289PATENT APPLICATIONIN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	H. Melman et al.	Examiner:	S. Alam
Serial No.:	09/398,289	Group Art Unit:	2172
Filed:	20 September 1999	Attorney Docket No.:	P-2804-US
Title:	APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR SEARCH AND RETRIEVAL OF DOCUMENTS		

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION MAILED 28 AUGUST 2001

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

23 November 2001

Dear Sir:

In response to the Official Action mailed 28 August 2001, kindly accept this respond to said office action and amendments to the above identified application.

This response has been composed and delivered by myself. A copy submitted for filing with the attorney's files.

Sincerely,

Haim Melman / Inventor.

Response is arranged by claims order:

1. A database for use in conjunction with information search, whereas said database contains at least one item representing at least one query.

The office action states that claim 1 is rejected under the presentation that Beall (US 6,032,145) teaches a database for use in conjunction with information search, whereas said database contains at least one item representing at least one query (column 4, lines 19, 35-40).

Examination of the cited lines do not show the above representation:

1. Beall defines a database as an "electronic catalog of products." (column 4 line 18). Beall further emphasize this property in column 4 lines 19-21: "The database 14 is perfectly constructed in a manner known as a "universal" catalog, in which like products from different suppliers have a single database record." Underline is added by myself.

THE ITEMS OF DATABASE 14 OF BEALL DO NOT REPRESENT AT LEAST ONE QUERY BUT AT LEAST ONE PRODUCT.

In column 4 lines 37-40 Beall refers to the need for a standard query format. He does not suggesting to store a query in a database.

Database 108 of the present invention contains items that are queries as clearly indicated by the specification text: "In a preferred embodiment of the invention, Query Composition section 200 contains Query window 202 where the current query is composed and Related Queries window 204 for display of relevant queries stored in System Database 108." Underline is added here for enhancement.

DATABASE OF THE PRESENT INVENTION CONTAIN ITEMS REPRESENTING QUERIES.

As Beall does not teach the argument stated in this office action in reference to claim 1, you are kindly requested to allow claim 1.

2. A database for use in conjunction with information search, whereas said database contains at least two terms and;
the terms are related through at least one item representing at least one query.

The office action states that as to claim 2 said database contains at least two terms..., (column 4 lines 19,35-40 and 58-64).

It is understood that the office action represents that Beall teaches a database that contains at least two terms.

Examination of the cited lines do not show the above representation:

1. As already demonstrated in the case of claim 1, the database of Beall contains PRODUCTS, not TERMS (it is clearly stated in the specifications that "terms" are elements of queries extracted from previously composed queries and added to the database for a later use).
2. In lines 58-62 Beall clearly says: "The search string is free-form, meaning that the string may be any combination of alphanumeric characters or search terms. No particular syntax is required for the searching string. The search string may comprise search terms in any order."
Beall teaches a search string that contains at least two terms
BUT BEALL DOES NOT TEACH A DATABASE THAT

CONTAINS AT LEAST TWO TERMS and contains the
RELATION of "appearing in the same query".

Nevertheless, an improved claim 2 is suggested here:

New claim 2:

A database for use in conjunction with information search,
whereas said database contains at least two terms EXTRACTED
FROM ONE ITEM REPRESENTING A QUERY and;
the terms are related through at least a part of SAID at least one
item representing at least one query.

As Beall does not teach the argument stated in this office action in
reference to claim 2 and in view of the additional details added to
claim 2, you are kindly requested to allow this claim.

3. A database for use in conjunction with information search, said database
comprises:
at least one information datum and;
at least one item representing at least one query and;
means for attributing said at least one information datum to said at least one
item.

The office action states that as to claim 3, at least one information
datum; at least one item representing at least one query; means for
attributing said at least one information datum to said at least one
item (column 4 lines 35-40 and 61-64).

It is understood that the office action represents that Beall teaches a
database that contains at least one datum, at least one item
representing a query an means attributing the datum to the query.

Examination of the cited lines do not show two of the above representation:

1. It is acceptable that Beall's database contains at least one information datum. In his case it represents a PRODUCT.
2. Beall's database DOES NOT contain items representing QUERIES.
3. Beall's database DOES NOT contain MEANS FOR ATTRIBUTING of any kind.

As Beall does not teach the argument stated in this office action in reference to claim 3, you are kindly requested to allow claim 3.

4. A method for composing queries comprising:
a database containing at least one item representing at least one query and;
means for composing a query and;
means for relating said at least one stored item to a query undergoing a composition process.

1. Sited paragraph columns 4 lines 35-40 has been discussed above and shown not to teach the representations of this office action.
2. In cited paragraph column 5 lines 10-20, Beal teaches matching a stored item (PRODUCT) to a query.
3. Beall DOES NOT teach in any of the cited paragraphs (columns 4 lines 35-40 and column 5 lines 10-20) a method for COMPOSING QUERIES. He teaches a method for USING QUERIES TO FIND PRODUCTS.

Nevertheless, to enhance the essence of claim 4 as a claim for a METHOD OF COMPOSING QUERIES, the following changes are suggested:

New claim4:

A method for composing queries comprising:
a database containing at least one item representing at least one query and;
means for composing a query and;
means for relating said at least one stored item to a query undergoing a composition process AND;
MEANS FOR USING AT LEAST A PART OF SAID AT LEAST ONE STORED ITEM TO MODIFY SAID QUERY UNDERGOING A COMPOSITION PROCESS.

You are kindly requested to allow the changes to claim 4 made by adding the means for modifying the query undergoing a composition process.

5. The method according to claim 4, including means for displaying at least one item representing at least one query stored in said database whereas said displayed at least one item is related to the said query undergoing a composition process by said relating means.

CLAIM 5 IS ABOUNDED IN VIEW OF THE CHANGES MAID IN CLAIM 4

6. A method for composing queries comprising:
a database containing at least one term and;
means for composing a query and;
means for relating said at least one stored term to a query undergoing a composition process.

1. Sited paragraph columns 4 lines 35-40 has been discussed above an shown not to teach the representations of this office action.

2. In cited paragraph column 5 lines 10-20, Beal teaches matching a stores item (PRODUCT) to a query.
3. Beall DOES NOT teach in any of the cited paragraphs (columns 4 lines 35-40 and column 5 lines 10-20) a method for COMPOSING QUERIES. He teaches a method for USING QUERIES TO FIND PRODUCTS.

Nevertheless, to enhance the essence of claim 4 as a claim for a METHOD OF COMPOSING QUERIES, the following changes are suggested:

New claim 6:

A method for composing queries comprising:
a database containing at least one term and;
means for composing a query and;
means for relating said at least one stored term to a query
undergoing a composition process AND;
MEANS FOR USING SAID AT LEAST ONE STORED TERM
TO MODIFY SAID QUERY UNDERGOING A COMPOSITION
PROCESS.

You are kindly requested to allow the changes to claim 6 made by adding the means for modifying the query undergoing a composition process.


7. The method according to claim 6, including means for displaying at least one term stored in said database whereas said displayed at least one term is related to the said query undergoing a composition process by said relating means.

CLAIM 7 IS ABOUNDED IN VIEW OF THE CHANGES MAID
IN CLAIM 6.

8. A method for search of information comprising:
a database containing at least one information datum and at least one item
representing at least one query and;
means for relating said at least one information datum to said at least one
item representing at least one query.

1. The present office action refers to column 4 lines 11-17:
“... Commands entered into web browser software cause
information to be extracted from the database 14 and displayed
at the workstation 18.”. The cited paragraph DOES NOT
TEACH A DATABASE CONTAINING QUERIES.
2. Nevertheless, to further enhance the scope of claim 8, a
modification is suggested hereinbelow. This modification
explicitly presents that the database contains also the relation
between a query and an information item (see specifications,
“Initial Search Process”, step 3).

New claim 8:



A method for search of information comprising:
a database containing at least one information datum and at least
one item representing at least one query and;
[means for relating] SAID DATABASE CONTAINS A
RELATION OF said at least one information datum to said at least
one item representing at least one query.

You are kindly requested to allow the changes to claim 8 made by
emphasizing that the query-information relation is also stored in the
database.

9. The method according to claim 8, including means for displaying at least one information datum stored in said database whereas said displayed at least one information datum is related to the said query undergoing a composition process by said relating means.

1. As this claim 9 is dependent on claim 8, and claim 8 was modifies to enhance the fact that the "relating means" are relations stored in the database (which is not suggested by Beall). Therefore the cited paragraph column 4 lines 11-17 does not teach the combination of claim 9 being dependent on claim 8.
2. Nevertheless, enhancement of claim 9 is suggested hereinbelow to emphasize the process of using the composed query to search previously saved queries and use the stored relations of a stored query to information data to extract such a data.

New claim 9:

The method according to claim 8, including means for displaying at least one information datum stored in said database whereas said displayed at least one information datum is related to the said [query undergoing a composition process by said relating means]
AT LEAST ONE STORED ITEM REPRESENTING AT LEAST ONE QUERY AND;
THE STEP OF EVALUATING SAID AT LEAST ONE STORED ITEM REPRESENTING A QUERY IN REFERENCE TO THE COMPOSED QUERY.

You are kindly requested to allow revised claim 8.

10. The method according to any of the above claims whereas items representing queries submitted first in a search session acquire higher ranking then items representing successive queries.

1. The cited paragraph (column 5, lines 59-64) reads: "The software 10 may also rank the DEGREE OF SIMILARITY BETWEEN EACH MATCHED DATABASE RECORD WITH THE SEARCH STRING."

Claim 10 clearly offers ranking "records" (stored queries), such "records" belong to a specific search session, THE RANKING IS ACCORDING TO THE ORDER IN WHICH THESE "RECORDS" HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED TO THE DATABASE. Beall clearly fails to teach this ranking method.

As Beall does not teach the argument stated in this office action in reference to claim 10, you are kindly requested to allow this claim.

11. The method according to any of the above claims and including a method to present to the user information to communicate at least one other user that searched for similar information.

1. The cited paragraph (column 3, lines 43-47) reads: "...providing a database search engine that can quickly and easily lead users to a desired database record; combining the benefits of key word searching with the benefit of hierarchical searching; providing an interface that will process any type of user entry displaying a list of products categories...."

THIS PARAGRAPH CONTAINS NO SUGGESTION TO PROVIDE THE USER WITH INFORMATION TO COMMUNICATE WITH ANOTHER USER THAT IS RELEVANT TO THE CURRENT SEARCH.

As Beall does not teach the argument stated in this office action in reference to claim 11, you are kindly requested to allow this claim.

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Note: Enclosed please find response to Office Action mailed 28 Aug 2001